

Lesson 18: Prepositional phrases

There is one more thing in the subject box, the **prepositional phrase**.

- describers,
- numbers,
- determiners, and
- **prepositional phrases**.

REVIEW:

First lets return to the idea of the subject (noun) box of the sentence.

The subject must have a main word →	* Girls
The box may have a determiner →	Dt * The girls
a number , →	Dt # * The three girls
and one or more describers →	Dt # Ds * The three young girls

A noun box can go in several places in the sentence (See Lesson 17 Noun Boxes). One of those places is after a preposition.

What is a preposition?

A preposition is a word that shows position, direction, time, place, purpose, etc.

What is a prepositional phrase?

A prepositional phrase is a preposition followed by a noun box.



Marking prepositional phrases.

I use the following signs to identify prepositional phrases: < | >

The brackets (< >) identify the phrase itself, and the straight line (|) separates the preposition from the noun box.

Here are some examples:

- <on | the table>
- < until |September>
- <in front of | the main building>
- <with | my three good friends>

Common Prepositions.

at	below	in	over
about	beneath	in front of	to (a place)
above	beside	into	towards
across from	between	near	under
after	by	next to	until
among	down	of	up
away	during	off	with
before	for	on	
behind	from	out of	

Note: some of these words can also be used as adverbs or equal words, or they might be part of phrasal verbs.

It is probably easier to learn prepositions by their **function**. For example:

Place: *above, across from, at, behind, in, next to, on, between, near*

Time: *after, at, before, for, during, in, on, until*

Direction: *at, from, to, towards*

Purpose: *for*



Prepositional Phrases in the subject box

Prepositional phrases usually come after the main subject. They give more information about the main subject.

X
The books on the table in the kitchen are his.

The **subject** of the sentence is *The books on the table in the kitchen*
We know this because it is everything in front of the X-Word.

Now we look at the subject more carefully. The first step is to identify any **prepositional phrases**. We see that there are two:

Dt * Dt *
The big books <on | the table> <in | the kitchen>

If we cross out the prepositional phrases, we are left with the main subject.

Dt Ds * Dt * Dt * X
The big books <on | the table> <in | the kitchen> are his.

Dt Ds * X
The big books are his.

The main word is **books**. We know that Describers tell us more about the main word. Prepositional phrases are like big describers, but they are groups of words and they come after the main word.

In this case they identify the books by their location.

big → **books** ← on the table

☞ **Remember:** It is the **main word** of the subject (books) that is the important, not the main word of the prepositional phrase. This word has to "agree" with the verb phrase. Therefore, you must **first identify the prepositional phrases** and get them out of the way. The **main word** that remains will be the main word of the subject.

Correct → the **books** ~~on the table~~ **are** Incorrect → the books on the **table** **is**

Prepositional phrases that tell us **Where** and **When**

Remember the order of things in the sentence?

SUBJECT VERB WHAT **WHERE** **WHEN** WHY HOW

Where, when, why, how, etc., are called sentence "adverbials." Adverbs tell us more about the action of the sentence (they "add" to the "verb"). **Where** and **When** are usually prepositional phrases.

< Where? > < When? >

Fred bought his accounting book <at | Barnes & Noble> <on | Monday.>

Often, the answer to "When" can be shifted to the front of the sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence. We call these SHIFTERS.

<On | Monday>, Fred bought his accounting book <at | Barnes & Noble>.



Lesson 18 Exercise 1 Noun Boxes Review

First, let's review by writing some subjects of our own. For each subject, I have given you one or two words. Complete the subjects. Write nothing in the darkened spaces.

	Determiner	Number	Descriptor	Main word
	The			
	Those			
			pretty	
	Maria's		older	
	My			
		two		

Lesson 18 Exercise 2 Prepositional phrases in the subject box.

In the following sentences, mark the X-Words, verbs, and box the complete subject. Then mark the prepositional phrases with < | >. Last, mark all of the words in the complete subject and put a bigger star ☆ over the main subject.

Dt ☆ Dt ☆ X

Example: The coffee <on | my desk> is cold.

1. The book on the table in the middle of the room was left there on Saturday.
2. The man in the picture on June's phone is her husband.
3. The woman in the taxi left her bag..
4. The house on the corner across from the library is my teacher's.
5. Those three girls with the funny hats are in a play tonight.
6. The man in the picture on June's phone is her husband.
7. The restaurant on the corner near school sells good coffee.



Lesson 18 Exercise 3

Write 5 sentences that have prepositional phrases in the SUBJECT. Be sure that each sentence begins with a **determiner** and that each subject contains at least one **prepositional phrase**.

Identify the subject of each sentence and identify everything inside of the subject box. Make sure that your X-Word/Verb agrees with the main subject.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Lesson 18 Exercise 4

Now write 5 sentences that have a prepositional phrase that answers *Where?* or *When?* or both in the *When* and *Where* adverbial positions. Use the slot sheet as a guide. Remember: *What?* (an object) is optional.

	SUBJECT	X	VERB	WHAT?	WHERE?	WHEN?
Ex	Tim	is	going		to the doctor	tomorrow.
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

